World Review of Political Economy Vol. 16 No. 2 Summer 2025 Pp. 252–280

Union Renewal in Chile and the Rate of Surplus Value: A Marxist Approach

Gonzalo Durán and Michael Stanton

Gonzalo Durán is Professor of Economics at the Social Work Department in the University of Chile. He is co-founder and researcher at Fundación SOL (www.fundacionsol.cl), a labor think tank based in Santiago, Chile. His research interests include income distribution, collective bargaining and trade unions. Email: gonzalo.duran.s@uchile.cl

Michael Stanton is an independent researcher. He was born in Manchester in 1951, and is the author of several books on workers' history and Marxism. Email: mstantonw@yahoo.com

Abstract: In Chile during the period 2006–2016, workers' organization and industrial insurgency grew, especially in the export sectors of the economy. The conventional approach has labeled this period as one of union renewal since rank-and-file organizations involved measures such as strikes and raised union density. This article raises the question of how exploitation could increase despite the presence of active rank-and-file movements during this period and investigates why union renewal is not accompanied by substantive improvements for the working class. This topic is of fundamental importance from a Marxist standpoint and adds more complexity to the understanding of the scope of union renewal in a particular country at a specific time.

Key words: union renewal; Chile; rank-and-file; rate of surplus value

Submission date: 28 May 2024; **Revision date:** 3 September 2024; **Acceptance date:** 20 September 2024; **Publication date:** 10 June 2025

DOI: 10.13169/worlrevipoliecon.16.2.0004

1. Introduction

In this article we analyze the period 2006–2016, when active rank-and-file movements are the new face of unionism and investigate if those social changes result in changes in total wages relative to profits.

As such, we examine working-class power by looking at traditional measures of union renewal, that is, rising unionization and strike levels (both legal and wildcat), together with changes in rank-and-file organization. We compare those changes to the general state of union power and measure the rate at which workers are exploited both before and after the period of union renewal.

As we will see, from 2006 to 2016—and following the conventional perspective of working-class power as its capacity to organize workers or to disrupt the economy—it is undeniable that working-class power increases. Having established this, we analyze the development of the Marxist rate of surplus value. The bulk of the literature about trade union renewal has been focused on the experiences of trade union leaders engaged in this process of renewal (e.g., Aravena and Nuñez 2009; Fox-Hodess and Santibáñez 2020; Muñoz 2022). Other authors have emphasized the scale of this industrial insurgency (Pérez, Medel, and Velásquez 2017). However, to the best of our knowledge, a Marxist analysis which investigates the changes in the rate of surplus value in particular, has not yet been attempted. This article seeks to fill this research gap.

We estimate that this article is of fundamental importance since the investigation of the combination of local workplace organization and changes in the rate of exploitation, could contribute to an understanding of the scope of union renewal if applied to the problems of those trade union strategies whose results sometimes contradict their expected outcomes.

This investigation is based on a mixed deductive methodology. We apply a theoretical position to the problem under investigation here presented, and we use data recovered from literature, interviews and databases. More precisely, the techniques used include: i) revision of the relevant and available literature on union renewal in Chile; ii) calculations of key indicators from publicly available state published information; iii) interviews with union leaders.

Nine semi-structured in-depth interviews were carried out between December 2019 and January 2020 and analyzed using MAXQDA software. Those interviewed are from the mining industry (4), logistics (1), and the retail sector (4), which are key sectors in the historically important process from 2006 to 2016. Those interviewed are recognized union leaders with experience, who agreed to be quoted in the text.

The rest of the article is organized as follows. The theoretical framework is presented in the following section. In Section 3, we discuss the historical development of trade union renewal. Sections 4 and 5 are the heart of this article, providing our findings and analysis of the Marxist rate of surplus value and the depth of trade union renewal in Chile. A conclusion is provided in Section 6.

2. The Theoretical Framework

We begin by defining what union renewal is traditionally understood to be. According to Pradeep Kumar and Christopher Schenk:

> Union renewal is the term used to describe the process of change, underway or desired, to "put new life and vigour" in the labour movement to rebuild its organizational and institutional strength. It refers to the variety of actions/initiatives taken or needed by labour organizations to strengthen themselves in the face of their declining role and influence in the workplace and society. (Kumar and Schenk 2006, 30)

As such, the traditional way to measure union renewal has been the growth in union density or collective bargaining (Frege and Kelly 2003) and the number and intensity of strikes (Las Heras and Rodríguez 2021) when an organization moves from a state of decline to one of strength. As Gregor Murray (2017) points out, there are a variety of union renewal strategies, which depend on the historical context and specific power dynamics. In the "organizing" line of analysis, union renewal is accompanied by an increase in rank-and-file activism (McAlevey 2016).

In general terms, the share of employees affiliated with trade unions (density) is the usual way to address the "organizational power" of the working class (Schmalz, Ludwig, and Webster 2018).

Our departure point in this work relies on the previous definitions. However, we integrate another variable: the rate of surplus value. To the best of our knowledge, this factor has not been considered so far as part of union renewal studies in Chile and can contribute to a Marxist understanding of that union renewal already studied during the period (2006–2016).

2.1. Surplus Value, Unpaid Value Which the Producer Creates

The surplus value is the excess over the original value advanced in the production process. Indeed, the self-expansion of value is the essence of capital. According to Marx, "The value originally advanced, therefore, not only remains intact while in circulation, but increases its magnitude, adds to itself a surplus-value, or is valorized. And this movement converts it into capital" (Marx 1976, 252). The surplus value is unpaid labor-time. As Marx said:

> All surplus-value, whatever particular form (profit, interest or rent) it may be subsequently crystalized into, is in substance the materialization of unpaid labor-time. The secret of the self-valorization of capital resolves itself into the fact that it has at its disposal a definite quantity of the unpaid labor of other people. (Marx 1976, 672)

Surplus value, understood as unpaid labor, is a specifically capitalist form of exploitation, as Marx observes:

> What distinguishes the various economic formations of society—the distinction between for example a society based on slave-labor and a society based on wage-labor—is the form in which the surplus labor is in each case extorted from the immediate producer, the worker.
>
> He (the worker) creates surplus-value which, for the capitalist, has all the charms of something created out of nothing. This part of the working day I call surplus labor-time. (Marx 1976, 325)

The surplus value finishes in the pockets of the capitalists that make use of unpaid labor. However, the balance between hours of paid to unpaid labor is historically determined. The more (or fewer) hours of work the worker is paid for, at any one time, the less (or more) are the unpaid hours.

That capacity of the worker to define the level of his/her wage (and as such his/her level of consumption), is related to the power he/she can exercise either locally or generally as an organized class and as such is also a "political" act.

But the balance between paid and unpaid labor may be changed to the advantage of capital by an increased intensification of labor applied to capital, by increased productivity in the consumer goods industries, by longer working hours, etc. (see discussion in Durán and Stanton 2024).

2.2. Rate of Surplus Value or Exploitation: A Measure of the Extent of Exploitation

If "s" is the extent of the surplus or the unpaid part of the working day and "v" is the value of labor-power or the portion of the working day which is paid, the ratio between s and v is the rate of surplus value (ROSV) (Marx 1976, 320).

$$ROSV = \frac{s}{v} \tag{1}$$

And the logic of calculating this rate is clearly laid out by Marx:

> The method of calculating the rate of surplus value is therefore, in brief, as follows. We take the total value of the product and posit the constant capital which merely re-appears in it as equal to zero. What remains is the only value that has actually been created in the process of producing the commodity. If the amount of surplus-value is given, we have only to deduct it from this remainder to find variable capital, and vice-versa if the latter is given and we need to find the

> surplus-value. If both are given, we have only to perform the concluding operation, namely calculate s/v, the ratio of the surplus-value to the variable capital. (Marx 1976, 327)

3. Historical Development of the Period of Trade Union Renewal in Chile (2006–2016)

3.1. The Historical Background

In terms of exposure to neoliberal policies, Chile is probably the country that has suffered the longest (Harvey 2005). From 1979 onwards, this country, which today has almost 20 million citizens, has endured the system of labor relations imposed during the Pinochet dictatorship, which was unique in the world at the time.

Based on the principle that the individual has supremacy over the collective and that unions are detrimental to the development of society, Pinochet and his collaborators imposed the *Plan Laboral* [Labor Plan], which limits collective bargaining to the legal entity level, which is even below the level of the company. This results in hyper-decentralized collective bargaining (Rojas-Miño 2001; Narbona 2015; Alvarez Vallejos 2011).

If, for example, a company has five legal entities, collective bargaining may only be conducted within each individual entity.[1] Capital quickly understands that by fragmenting itself into an infinite number of legal entities, it can effectively reduce the associative power of the working class. For example, the D&S company, owner of the Lider supermarket chain, one of the largest in the country, decides to manage each of its hundreds of stores through a different legal entity (Bank-Muñoz 2017). But the changes do not end there.

The Pinochet government, led by the architect of the Labor Plan, Labor Minister José Piñera, breaks with the tradition of union unicity by imposing union competition inside each legal entity, which results in even more fragmentation of the working class. In an incipient free market economy, rival unions competing for the same pool of workers inside the individual entity fit well with the concept of fierce competition (Narbona 2015).

Aside from these two central pillars of the Labor Plan, José Piñera also attacks the right to strike institutionally when he implements the idea of a strike that "does not paralyze," by allowing the use of scabs or strikebreakers. The fourth and last dictatorial pillar is union depoliticization, which promotes a cultural change in the working class such that unions and collective action are not to be seen as tools of social transformation but merely as ways of negotiating demands and always encapsulated inside the individual company.

In contrast, Chile had a growing trade union movement prior to the Pinochet dictatorship, where workers participated directly in defining social change (Angell 2010), raising power from below (Raptis 1973).

3.2. Breaking Old Habits

Union organization during the early 1990s, after the election of the first post-Pinochet government, is closely related to mainly male workers in the mining and manufacturing sectors and linked to the state apparatus and parliamentary political parties in general (Bank-Muñoz 2017, 37).

The Aylwin "*Concertación*"[2] government forms its policies into a strategy designed to implement a controlled and pacific transition to normal parliamentary democracy (Bank-Muñoz 2017, 32). The government's labor policy is fully integrated with this strategy and, with the aid of the national union center, *Central Unitaria de Trabajadores* (CUT) [Unitary Workers' Center], puts a cap on wage rises and union recruitment plans (Pérez-Ahumada 2023, 45).

This policy ends in the "union crisis" during the government, when union membership stops rising and many of the most active union activists distance themselves from the CUT, whose integration into the government's plans for an orderly transition is an outstanding failure when employers exercise their class solidarity and refuse to negotiate any profound changes in labor legislation (Pérez-Ahumada 2023, 46–50).

On the other hand, during that period the economy is changing from just an exporter of raw materials to integrating a larger services sector which becomes progressively more female-dominated (Bank-Muñoz 2017). Meanwhile, as in many other capitalist countries (Moody 2017), Chile experiences a process of concentration and centralization of capital. This presents a special challenge for the working class: many large companies (where collective bargaining is more common) fragment into small bargaining units or legal entities with the consequence that the marginalization of the collective bargaining system proceeds even further (Durán 2022; Calderón 2008). Kim Moody refers to this as the changing terrain of class-struggle (Moody 2017).

With the economy growing relatively fast, from 1990 until 1998 at an average annual rate of 7.1% (Ffrench-Davis 2018), real wages rise and by 1997 recover their previous levels of 1980 (Berg and Contreras 2007). Consequently, many workers can feel better off despite the restrictions imposed by the policy of the "controlled and orderly transition" on collective bargaining.

3.3. The Fragmentation of the CUT

As a reaction to the integration of the CUT in that political process, during the Aylwin government the *Movimiento de Autonomía Sindical* (MAS) [Trade Union

Autonomy Movement] which groups many activists in the construction and mining industries, breathes new life into the union movement while the CUT is losing its force (Olguin 2000). A second union center, the *Central Autónoma de Trabajadores* (CAT) [Autonomous Workers' Center], is also formed in 1995 as are others during the 2000s (Pérez-Ahumada 2023, 61).

The partial reformulation of the *Concertación* governments under President Bachelet from 2006 onwards brings government policy closer to workers' demands and interacts with the great wave of militant rank-and-file organization and strikes that rock the country from 2005 onwards. Indeed, Michelle Bachelet goes along with subcontract workers' demands for bonus payments during her election campaign in 2005, when the state mining giant *Corporación Nacional del Cobre* (CODELCO) [National Copper Corporation of Chile] pays out large bonuses to directly employed miners during the copper boom but leaves the subcontract workers out of the picture, as always (Nuñez 2009).

The first national subcontracted workers' union organization, the National Coordinator of Subcontracted Workers (CNTC), presents CODELCO with demands for productivity bonus at the end of 2005 and calls a national strike at the beginning of 2006 (Muñoz 2022, 157), but only the CNTC bases at *El Teniente* and *Andina* follow the call to action. However, and despite that weakness, companies sign "framework agreements" to provide and wash working clothes and respect legal requirements over heavy work and safety rules.

During the Bachelet administration, both the Minister for Labor and the Labor Directorate from time to time support the upsurge of new union organization. Her majority *Concertación* government approves the introduction of important changes to the old dictatorship's labor code, which are to redefine its concept of a "business" (Rojas-Miño 2001) and its responsibilities toward its workers to include all the parts of a central holding, and as such open the doors to wider negotiations on wages and conditions. Another change is to include many more workers in collective bargaining by redefining the nature of "subcontracted" work.

Although many of the measures originally considered by the government are either watered down or forgotten under the employers' pressure and class solidarity, they express what is a widespread feeling at the time, that workers are not sharing in the benefits of the economic and political changes which the country has seen since the fall of Pinochet (Alvarez Vallejos 2009).

CODELCO does not respect the agreement negotiated at the beginning of 2006, even though it is already taking part in tripartite talks to implement the new subcontracting law and the following June 2007, at the inaugural conference of a new and more powerful union coordinator, the unions call a national strike to force CODELCO's hand.

3.4. The Fragmented Workplace

The neoliberal offensive to roll back many of those gains in the standard of living enjoyed by working-class families during the Popular Unity government brought with it the fragmentation and externalization of diverse types of businesses. The scale of these changes is impressive; by halfway through the first decade of the new millennium, 64% of the mining labor force was estimated to be subcontracted or externalized (Figure 1).

What is the worst thing about the subcontracting system? According to Edward Gallardo, a union leader for mining subcontractors: "You can change from one subcontractor to another, and so on, for higher wages, but you lose all the other labor conditions as well. You can't buy a house, you can't plan your kids' education, you can't plan anything."[3]

As in many mining companies, Forestal Arauco in the forestry industry externalizes nearly all its functions, from planting, thinning, pruning, extraction, road construction, transport, etc. (Ruminot 2009). The umbrella company of Forestal Arauco, Celulosa Arauco Constitución, reported 992 subcontractors providing some 27,000 jobs in 2009.[4] But the fragmentation of the production process brought with it its opposite, that is the integration or coordination of the parts into a whole. Although many holdings proclaim that their businesses are independent, what is really the case is that the network of production functions as a whole and their workers are really a "collective" process, as Marx used to say (Marx 1976,

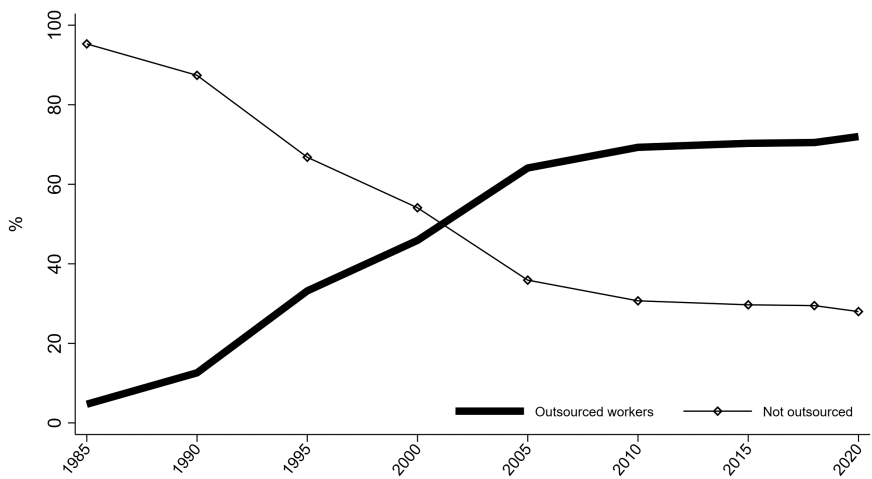

Figure 1. Development of the Outsourced Workers in Mining, 1985–2020

Source: Authors' elaboration from SERNAGEOMIN databases.

43). The production process itself creates links between workers who share such conditions as work at high altitude, shift patterns and dangerous situations where the safety of one worker depends on others looking out for his safety (Muñoz 2022).

The retail industry also has both fragmented and integrated its distribution process and its workers. There were more than 61 thousand workers in the 273 Cencosud supermarket locals in 2014 (Pérez 2019). But a "replenisher" works in a supermarket filling shelves for "his" brand and when he/she has finished, travels to another supermarket to do the same (Pérez and Link 2018). So, the worker is both "fragmented" and "integrated" with various workforces (Pérez 2019).

And when one CODELCO subcontractor sacks all or part of its workforce in the mining industry, those workers may find employment with other subcontractors and spread the seed of new rank-and-file organization (Pérez 2019).

Those dispersed groups of subcontracted CODELCO workers find that they share the fate of not being allowed to use the same dining room as the directly contracted workers, and that they all are driven to work in lorries and not in buses, as is the case of direct workers.[5]

In other words, wage-labor is put to use in each company, bought and sold on the market as any other commodity but during the rebuilding of union strength, organized workers break the isolation and begin to form new ties.

3.5. The Necessity of Organization

The social or class integration of a fragmented workforce can be made from above, in bureaucratic fashion when the union negotiating apparatus represents its members without directly involving them. Or organization can be driven from below in democratic and radical ways, when the rank-and-file members themselves create new links and feel their own power (Baccaro, Hamann, and Turner 2003; Palacios-Valladares 2010). The path taken depends on a multitude of factors. In some cases, activists may have already passed through years of radicalized union organization, such as those with a history in the *Sindicato Interempresas de Trabajadores Contratistas de la Mineria* (SITECO) [Union of Subcontracted Mineworkers] or the *Sindicato Interempresa Nacional de Trabajadores de Montaje Industrial* (SINAMI) [National Inter-company Union of Industrial Assembly Workers] who forged the subcontractors' unions in the Rancagua mining industry (Nuñez 2009).

The conditions of work themselves also may impose conditions where direct contact between sections of workers is the only practical way to organize, such as in the forestry industry where workplaces lie in outlying parts of great forestry plantations (Ruminot 2009). The transport drivers who are an important part of the production process are also a cog which connects the many groups of dispersed

workers, and mass meetings integrate them all. In this way, workers in around 100 subcontracting companies are linked together in a movement which organizes 8,000 workers (Ruminot 2009).

Subcontracted workers employed by CODELCO are often not paid overtime, work in unsafe conditions and do not have holidays, because they are regularly dismissed just before being employed for a full year and as such lose their rights.

These conditions are the soil from which sprout the seeds of a new unionism. We have already seen that, at the end of 2005, during the "OMO" strike in Rancagua (OMO is a detergent used to wash clothes), workers force CODELCO to be responsible for the washing of their work clothes, because previously they had to take them home, covered in dust from the mine, with the associated danger of spreading silicosis to their families.[6]

Many subcontracted workers come from poor families and often see themselves as discriminated against and identify themselves as those who fight (Muñoz 2022). They are not wrong.

It will come as no surprise to know that the drive to organize and integrate a fragmented workforce is fiercely resisted by their employers, who organize generalized and united ruling class opposition to changes in the law over the definition of "the business" and help those industries which fight the attempts to integrate workers from different "independent" companies in the same negotiations.

That union drive to negotiate outside the legal limits set by Pinochet's unreformed old labor code (the *Plan Laboral*), which necessarily involves mass rank-and-file direct action, starts with the subcontracted workers movement inside the state-owned mining giant, CODELCO, at the end of 2005.

It then spreads to the forestry workers movement between March and May of 2007 and the salmon industry strike from December 2007 to March of 2008.

These movements integrate marches, mass meetings of thousands of workers, occupations of factories, access roads and town centers, and confrontations with police forces which bring injury to many and death to more than one worker. Their impact is all the greater because they occur during the period after the presidential elections of November 2005 and the uprising of the secondary school students who are up in arms against the education system during 2006, and who organize national delegate meetings which are widely televised (Alvarez Vallejos 2009). As for the levels of success or failure of the movements, that varies greatly.

The old habits of the "underground" unionism during Pinochet's regime fade into the past as new union leaders rebuild SITECO, the subcontracted workers' inter-company union, from 2002 onwards in Rancagua.

SINAMI's 1987 Congress decides to create a series of inter-company unions to organize subcontracted workers (Muñoz 2022, 151). Those unions are recognized by their employers in *El Teniente*, until CODELCO bans their leaders from

entering its mines in 1995 and sacks 3,200 subcontracted workers after an explosion closes part of *El Teniente*, provoking marches and occupations of local government offices. However, by the end of the decade, the inter-company unions are back negotiating collective agreements with some of the largest transnational subcontracting companies.

By 2003, after another campaign of occupations of access roads and buildings, the union has 6,000 members and 130 recognized leaders with legal protection, nearly all under 30 years of age. They build their base in continuous conversations in bars and canteens, in union formation assemblies and end-of-year swimming pool parties, where their restriction on alcohol wins over workers' wives, who often declare that their husbands have even changed in their homes (interview with Peña 2019). It soon becomes clear that SITECO needs more support if it is to beat the subcontract system, so its new leaders travel to the north of the country to attend and organize national meetings of CODELCO subcontract workers and take part in the formation of the CTC (Confederation of Subcontracted Mining Workers).

The subcontracted workers' strike in CODELCO in 2006, manages to force the management to negotiate directly with representatives of many different contracting companies and sign a tripartite Framework Agreement, which is a multi-company agreement, inside CODELCO, but not an industry-wide agreement covering both the state and private sectors. They win a series of demands that narrow the differences between their conditions and those of directly employed miners, such as a productivity bonus and insurance against accidents, death and injury (Nuñez 2009). The latter is an important change because, as Edward Gallardo, one of the subcontract workers' leaders tells us: "If there's an accident at work, even a fatal one, the worker has no right to stop work under the labor code. The worker has no right to stop work, to strike, in those conditions according to the law."[7]

In other words, the renewal process breaks down the walls between groups of wage earners, of workers as sellers of their labor-power as a commodity on the market and creates a collective working class.

In the south of Chile, Forestal Arauco forestry workers manage to negotiate for all their subcontract members, and even win improvements for the sawmill workers, who are central to the production process. They refuse to sign an agreement which would leave those workers out, and only the intervention of the catholic church hierarchy convinces the CEO of Forestal Arauco to concede. The success of the movement doubles many workers' wages (Ruminot 2009).

On the other hand, Aguas Claras salmon industry strike fails altogether as the employers refuse to negotiate with representatives of different sectors of workers, and in the end many of those involved accept a "golden handshake" to leave their

jobs. Aguas Claras employers receive national class solidarity from employers' organizations, who, having organized themselves to oppose changes in the labor legislation during 2006, now move to put a full stop to the spread of "sector-wide" negotiations which they think are getting out of hand and cannot even be controlled by the government (Alvarez Vallejos 2009).

But these very public conflicts are also reflected in the development of other disputes, such as those in Walmart (from 2006 on), in Coca-Cola (from 2007 on) and port workers (from 2012 on). In those conflicts, the workers' organizations also use direct radical democratic activity to organize their bases.

For example, the Coca-Cola subcontractor workers' leaders from Santiago travel to distribution centers in the south of the country to build the Coca-Cola distribution union, with all its ups and downs (Ayala Córdova and Ratto Ribó 2018).

And, in order to achieve official recognition of their new union, 200 of the 800 Walmart logistics workers block off their main distribution center by chaining the gates shut with everyone inside and as a last resort "tamper" with the building's electrical system and its associated refrigeration (Bank-Muñoz 2017). They also have to face competition from a "company" union and so identify the differences between a union as a democratic body dedicated to integrating, training, and organizing the members themselves, and a yellow union which acts much like a part of the company's human resources department. The battle is long and difficult, with many crises.

With the growing exports of fruit, etc., Chilean ports come to employ 21,000 dockworkers, only a fifth of whom are on permanent contracts, the rest being on daily contracts (Rojas 2016). "Cargo loading and unloading is performed by these *eventuales* [eventual] workers, as permanent jobs are reserved mostly for lower management and supervisory functions" (Rojas 2016, 43).

The dockworkers build their *Union Portuaria* (Dockworker Union Federation) through illegal strikes involving dozens of ports and win the establishment of joint committees on health and safety in the stevedoring firms and the payment of lifetime pensions (Fox-Hodess and Santibáñez 2020).

Returning to the miners' disputes, during and after the 2006 strike some of SITECO's and the CTC's leaders visit the secondary school students' occupied schools, but also become union "superstars" and dedicate more time attending meetings in other countries and in universities, than making sure their bases are well organized (interview with Peña 2019).

Pressure both from CODELCO and the government also weakens their position. CODELCO agrees to internalize just 1,500 subcontracted workers (of the 5,000 recommended by the Labor Directorate out of a total of nearly 44,000 subcontracted workers in 2007), but the subcontracting companies do not respect

the terms of the 2007 agreement, and CODELCO does not include those terms either in the contracts made with its subcontracting affiliates (interview with Peña 2019).

The CTC calls another strike in 2008, this time to try to force CODELCO to internalize more of its thousands of subcontract workers. They shut down CODELCO's production within a few days, but are unprepared for the company's reaction, which is to call in professional negotiators from the CUT and the government's ministries of labor and internal affairs, who sign an agreement which agrees to stop the strike in exchange for a few very minor improvements, and without consulting the CTC itself. One thousand CTC members lose their jobs because of that "agreement" (interview with Peña 2019).

However, during the following years, the CTC manages to negotiate continual improvements in wages and conditions, through the signing of annual "Framework Agreements."

In April 2013, CODELCO insists that the CTC should negotiate directly with the subcontractors and the CTC mobilizes its members to occupy CODELCO's divisions. In the occupied *El Salvador* mine, rank-and-filers resist eviction by riot police, who kill a CTC miner. In the end, CODELCO is forced to renegotiate another agreement directly with the CTC (Rojas 2016).

However, the copper boom comes to an end in 2014. CODELCO instructs its subcontractors to establish company-based unions to keep the CTC out and CTC membership starts to drop. On the other hand, the CTC starts working to integrate private-sector mining workers in its organization (Muñoz 2022).

During this crucial period, some of CTC's leaders are attracted by the oncoming election (in 2013) and splits occur over the allocation of substantial funds to election campaigns for some of its leaders and advisors; as an expression of the CTC's growing bureaucracy is that, of its 15 strong national leadership, only one has been elected by a Congress.[8]

By the end of 2013, the PC (communist party) decides to take part in Michelle Bachelet's New Majority (ex-*Concertación*) government but during her government from 2014 to 2018, CODELCO refuses to sign another Framework Agreement in 2015, dismisses 25,000 workers and the wages paid to others fall steeply.

In other words, the combination of the decline in the CTC's active rank-and-file base and the end of the labor explosion of 2006–2007, makes the option of closer relations with the government more attractive (Angell 1972) and weakens the possibilities of direct bilateral and democratic control over the CTC's leadership. This is even more important after CTC creates, in 2014, a Confederation level organization, above the base of affiliated unions and their Regional Federations (Muñoz 2022).

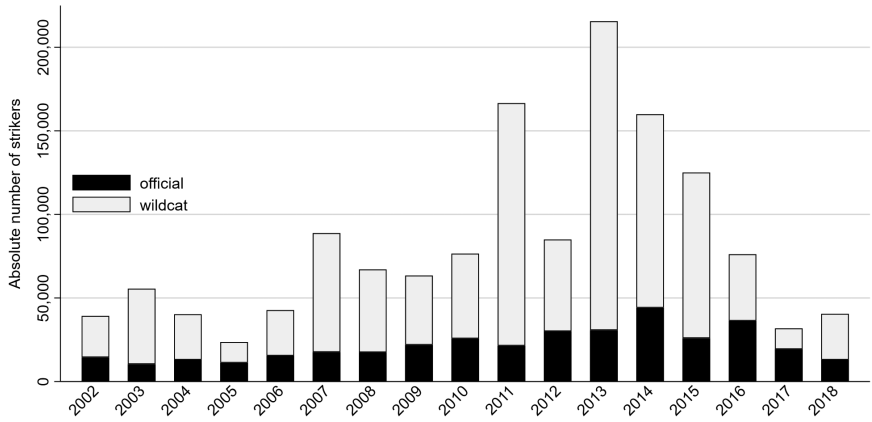

Figure 2. The Number of Strikers by Type of Strike, 2002–2018

Source: Authors' elaboration from the database of the Observatorio de Huelgas Laborales (OHL).[9]

Note: Calculations on the private sector of the economy.

Meanwhile, a common feature of the strikes that are still occurring is that they are mostly illegal (wildcat, see Figure 2), outside the narrow limits of the labor law (Medel and Pérez 2017). Most of these strikes are concentrated in mining, transport and construction and few in manufacture, financial services and commerce.

4. The Economy under the Marxist Lens

One of the central pillars of the Marxist analysis of the economy is that the working class sells its labor-power to the capitalist class. The activation of that labor-power during the working day finances both wages and profits; in Chile, out of a working day of 8 hours, 3 hours of labor pay the wages and 5 hours finance the profits (Durán and Stanton 2022).

That exploitation is the source of profits and the why and wherefore of the capitalist system. Figure 3 below shows the variations in the rate of exploitation (obtained by dividing the 5 hours [profits] by the 3 hours [wages]) between 1990 and 2018. In other words, the figure shows the relation of profits to wages.

The figure shows that, during the period of union renewal (2006–2016), real wages rise but the rate of exploitation does not fall (the ROSV in 2002 was 78%, in 2006, it was 123%, in 2008, it was 144%, in 2010, it was 148%, and in 2015, it was 159%), indicating that profits also rise in the same proportion (at least) as wages. Productivity also increases at the same rate.

4.1. Wages, Exploitation, and Productivity

Figure 3 shows that profits do not fall relative to wages during the period which we investigate, despite the impact of the active rank-and-file movement of 2006–2016. Causes may be the unusual economic conditions of the copper boom from 2004 onwards, the restriction of higher levels of organization to just a few sectors of the working class, or the impact of higher levels of productivity due to the increase in work intensity (Durán and Stanton 2024).

It is more likely that unions will be able to improve working conditions and also recoup a greater portion of the extracted surplus value when they move as a united force. By merging unions and undertaking a campaign of unionization in conjunction with defragmentation, workers can move in this direction. Consequently, industry-wide collective bargaining is necessary in order to articulate the collective worker that Marx identified. Class solidarity can make a significant difference.

The copper boom, measured in terms of national economic productivity (or production per worker), is important during the period between 2003 and 2014 and creates conditions for the possibility of rising profits while the rate of exploitation does not change significantly.

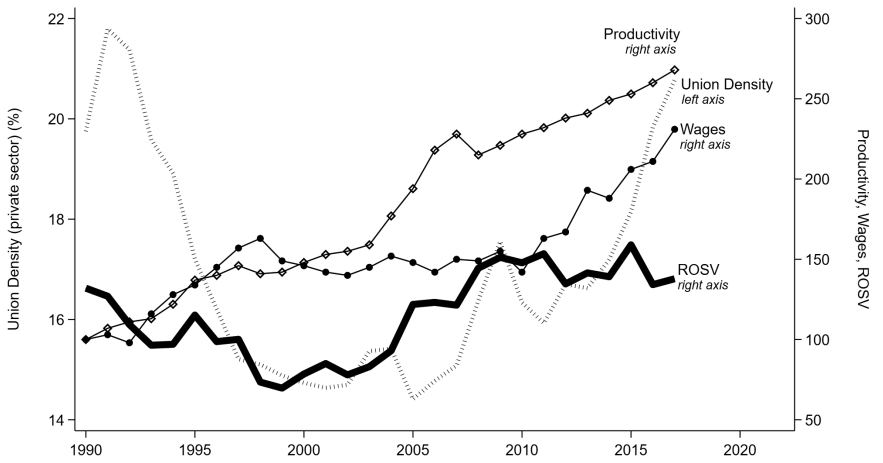

Figure 3. Average Labor Productivity, Real Wages, Rate of Exploitation and Unionization

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Notes: Productivity means labor productivity index (1990 = 100) and is defined as real GDP over total worked hours. GDP is Gross Domestic Product and the sources of data are National Accounts (Central Bank of Chile).[10] Wages mean real wage index (1990 = 100) and comprise wages of private sector workers (including domestic service). The source for worked hours is the Labor Force Survey (National Institute of Statistics).[11] Data for Union Density (private sector) is from the Union Yearbook of the Labor Directorate.[12] ROSV is the rate of surplus value defined as the surplus value over the adjusted wage bill, figures of which are from Durán and Stanton (2022).

Real wages rise for both unionized and non-unionized workers, who form the majority of the working class. However, this is not attributed to union renewal. Indeed, during the 2000s, even with active strikes, real wages remain almost stagnant (see Figure 3). Then after the end of the international financial crisis, real wages begin to rise. According to Ricardo Ffrench-Davis, the decisive factor is the end of the inflationary pressures by the end of 2008 (Ffrench-Davis 2018, 266).

So, why union renewal does not lead to a decrease in the rate of exploitation? It is important to note that even when real wages increase, the extraction of surplus value also increases. The rate of surplus value can therefore rise even when real wages are growing. During the period of economic expansion that we investigate, while the worker sells his or her labor-power for a higher wage (and as such, buys more goods that he or she needs to keep on working), that worker is also producing more or much more value for his employer (see discussion in Durán and Stanton 2024).

4.2. Copper Mining and the Economy in General

The evident economic bonanza based on the rise of copper exports during the period under analysis is not necessarily reflected in all the sectors of the economy.

In general terms, in a competitive market the mass of profits that accrue to the first employer to invest in new processes is increased (Marx 1976), but this process is somewhat different when those competitors are monopolistic and part of a booming market with continuous rises in prices and demand, as is the case during the Chilean copper boom. Under these conditions, the relative success of one business does not necessarily impose pressure to enforce the redistribution of profits on competitors, and all can increase their profits without changing their shares in the total.

That process changes when the boom comes to an end and relatively normal competitive conditions return. We have seen that wages and conditions of subcontracted mineworkers improve after the 2006 strike, but then fall as CODELCO marginalizes the CTC and fires thousands of them as the copper boom comes to an end in 2014–2015.

Rising productivity in the economy as a whole—which could reflect the copper boom itself, does not automatically bring with it a redistribution of wealth from wages to profits, because the sum of paid and unpaid value is simply divided among a greater number mass of products (Marx 1976, 534), or because the amount of both paid and unpaid value increases at the same rate (Durán and Stanton 2024).

We repeat that increased productivity does not necessarily bring rapidly rising real wages.

For example, physical production in the mining industry itself does not change greatly during the period of 2003–2017 and physical productivity falls to half its previous level, as the number of workers in the copper industry rises from 99,894 to 217,404.[13]

But value productivity per worker in the mining industry doubles during that period, in conditions where wages rise, but do not double (own calculations based on figures from Mining Yearbook by Sernageomin[14] and National Institute of Statistics[15]).

In other words, from the same level of physical production, the mining industry makes much higher profits.

Both the state (as owner of CODELCO) and other companies benefit, directly or indirectly, from the copper boom.[16]

The changed balance between profits and wages, however, is also accelerated by the falling value of the replenishment of labor-power, which is the value of labor-power itself. This fall is the result of rising imports of low-cost consumer goods from China and other countries.

4.3. Consumer Goods, the Value of Labor-Power, Imports from China, and Indebtedness

If we consider the capitalists in general, we find that the money they pay for the labor-power they buy, which is the wages received by their workers, sometimes buys more consumer goods (Marx 1976, 659).

That value represented by the wage will lead to rising consumption if those goods are bought at costs which are lower than the national average, for example, because of a rise in imports of those goods from other countries. This is indeed the case during those years when imports of Chinese consumer goods rise very rapidly (from US$ 4,542 million in 2006 to US$ 17,577 million in 2018, figures from the World Integrated Trade Solution database).[17]

As such, the importation of cheap consumer goods may offset the difficulties in negotiating wages and conditions when unions have to contend with fragmented employers and fragmented workforces.

In other words, the wage laborers may feel better off as their wage buys more goods, even though the increase in those goods is not a consequence of their efforts to squeeze more from their employers by selling their commodity, labor-power, for a higher price.

However, the higher buying power of wages does not put an end to the miserable living conditions suffered by many working-class families. At the household level, the debt-to-income ratio was 36.5 in 2003, 57.9 in 2008, and 66.7 in 2016 (own calculations using data from the "National Accounts Report by Institutional Sectors" provided by the Central Bank of Chile).[18] The great majority of working-class households have debts (Universidad San Sebastián and Equifax 2018) because their wages do not cover their costs (Durán and Kremerman 2018) even though their real wages rise between 2011 and 2016 (visible in Figure 3). The weight of debt, the weight of daily life, and the reality of commodity fetishism can

be a reason to join a union and enter into conflict, and also a reason to not get organized, as reported by the interviewed union leaders.

To sum up, the impact of the union renewal period was just one change felt by the working class during the period under investigation. Others were the copper boom, slightly higher wages and cheap consumer goods imports from China (Durán and Stanton 2022), and the weight of household debt which underlines the general low level of wages.

5. Delving Deeper into Trade Union Renewal

We have so far looked at the trade union renewal process from the perspective of case studies (e.g., Bank-Muñoz 2017; Ayala Córdova and Ratto Ribó 2018; Manky 2018; Fox-Hodess and Santibáñez 2020; Pérez 2019; Durán-Palma and López 2009). An increase in the strike frequency has been posited as the main driver of such renewal, as Domingo Pérez states: "In neoliberal times, strike conflict appears to be the main factor creating union renewal" (Pérez 2022, 24). Furthermore, we have shown that the rate of surplus value has not declined during the studied period, but rather increased. That finding represents a new step in union renewal studies in Chile and raises the question of how exploitation could continue at high levels—and not diminish—despite the presence of active rank-and-file movements. To address this question, it is necessary to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the figures of union growth, taking into account the different sectors and sexes of workers. It is also of particular importance to conduct a further analysis using our Marxist approach presented in Section 2.

5.1. Union Growth, Changes in Working-Class Organization and Collective Bargaining

By 2016, when the union renewal period ends, Chile has around 9,000 trade unions (in the private sector) which have been established in more than 1 million companies. However, this enormous number of unions does not reflect a high union density. In fact, in 2016, almost 80% of private-sector employees are neither unionized nor covered by collective bargaining (Dirección del Trabajo 2023; Durán 2022).

The union density (in the private sector) increased from 15% in 2006 to 20% in 2016. Since 1990, this is the largest increase in ten years (own calculation from Dirección del Trabajo 2023). However, during the same period, the number of unions also increased, from 6,703 in 2006 to 8,889 in 2016 (private sector, own calculation from Dirección del Trabajo 2023), also the largest growth in a ten-year period. In other words, union renewal enhances union density but does not break the fragmentation that was initiated during the dictatorship (Durán 2022).

As of 2007, the median number of members in their union in the private sector was 36 (own calculation based on SIRELA database).[19] During the period of trade union renewal, the median number increased from 36 to 43, which is not a significant change. This means that fragmentation waters down, to some extent, the power related to rising union density.

When profits decrease, capitalists activate counteracting factors, as Marx pointed out. In the context of union renewal, an increase in union density and strike frequency seems to pose a challenge to profit levels, however, fragmentation caused by corporations, but also by the workers themselves (all interviews), acts as a counteracting force.

Also, even though strikes increase, capitalists gain terrain through "no-strike collective agreements" (collective bargaining where workers do not have the right to strike). At the beginning of the 1990s, around 24% of all workers involved in collective agreements were "legally" unable to go on strikes (own calculation based on Dirección del Trabajo 2023). By 2020, this figure had grown to 40%. Even during the period of union renewal, this rate rose from 25% in 2006 to a peak of 33% in 2014 (own calculation based on Dirección del Trabajo 2023). As such, "no-strikes" collective agreements have flourished during the last 30 years and even during the period of union renewal.

There are at least two reasons for which unions consented to collective bargaining without the right to strike. Firstly, most cases can be explained by the presence of a so-called "yellow union," a union that is employer-friendly and attempts to undermine collective bargaining standards of the other unions coexisting at the firm level,[20] or simply because union leaders do not feel comfortable pressuring employers. The second explanation is the flexibility of such a type of collective agreement. For example, negotiations may be advanced prior to the expiry date of the actual agreement, if one exists. Occasionally, this option is preferred (even though the right to strike is lost) due to the rank-and-file's indebtedness. Debt burdens can be reduced through collective bargaining. Thus, the earlier the negotiations start, the more attractive it is for indebted workers to negotiate.[21]

In terms of labor legislation, capitalists have a variety of institutional powers (Narbona 2015), and despite the growth in labor insurgency have steadily gained territory, signing relatively more and more collective agreements without the right to strike vis a vis those with the right to strike. This fact, and the high level of fragmentation, can contribute to an understanding of why the rate of surplus value does not decrease during the period of union renewal. In other words, capitalists undermine the associational power of the working class through fragmentation and "inoffensive" collective bargaining agreements, among other means. A further advantage gained by capitalists during this period is the intensification of

work (Durán and Stanton 2024). These factors are what Marx referred to as counteracting factors that prevent the rate of profit from falling.

5.2. Union Members and Union Density

Between 2006 and 2016, union membership increased by 62%. Of the total of roughly 430,000 new members, 35% were men and 65% women. As a result, a clear and important upward trend in female union density can be seen, while male union density remains practically unchanged (Figure 4).

In other words, at a national level, union renewal is not evident among male workers but is real among female workers. Given that it was in male-dominated sectors that disruptive union renewal actions were initiated, this situation is puzzling.

According to union leaders interviewed, this contradictory situation was the result of the counteroffensive activities from capital and a failure to institutionalize "temporarily" heightened bargaining power. As such, the working class in export-male-dominated economic sectors failed to weaken the pillars of the *Plan Laboral* during the period of union renewal.[23]

An important pull factor behind the increase in union density is the activation of female workers. Why are female rank-and-file more likely to unionize?

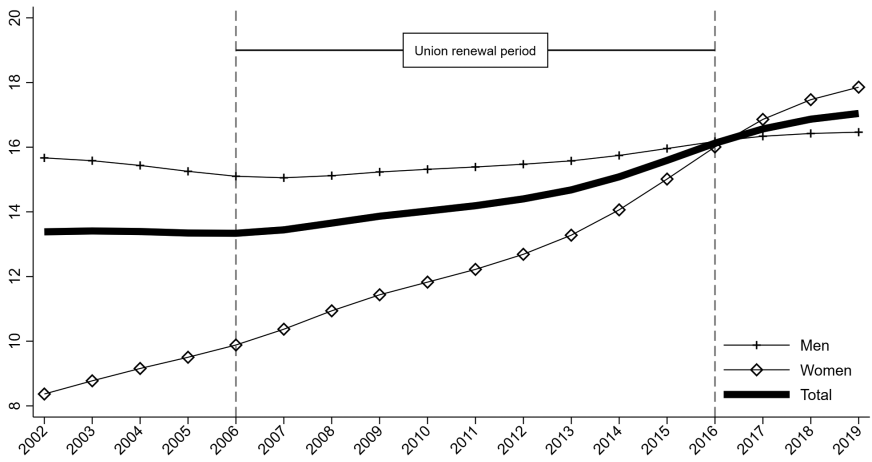

Figure 4. Union Density, Total and by Sex 2002–2019

Source: Authors' elaboration based on the Union Yearbook of the Labor Directorate.[22]

Notes: (1) Union density is defined as the percentage of unionized and occupied labor force, both cases excluding the public sector and including private sector and own-account unionized workers. It was not possible to isolate unionization in the private sector only by sex. (2) Official information is not available to realize the calculations before 2002. (3) The figure shows tendency according to the selected Hodrick-Prescott tendency component.

During the 2000s, women experienced a gradual increase in their participation in the labor force (Brega, Durán, and Sáez 2015). Furthermore, the commodification of care activities has placed a strain on the female labor force (Sato and Durán 2024). Consequently, women are facing worse working conditions in the labor market than men (Brega, Durán, and Sáez 2015), and the unions are the natural path chosen to improve wages.[24] In other words, the union renewal of export-based, male-dominated economic sectors is having a spillover effect on the tertiary sector, which is dominated by women.

Union density by economic sector has not been stressed so far in the literature on union renewal. The following figure shows harmonized union density (see details at the bottom of the graph) and it can be seen that the finance and commerce sectors exhibit a strong upward trend from 2006 onwards. Community, Social and Personal Services also exhibit the same upward trend (Figure 5 below). However, mining, one of the key sectors, shows a downward trend in union density.

Workers in the new retail unions, both Chileans and migrants, have responded in much the same way as workers in unions in other types of workplaces. For example, according to Mirian Campuzano, a union leader at Walmart:

> The assemblies are periodic, and we are behind because our agreement was to have one every month. One about working conditions, and another dedicated to union training. We haven't done many of those because something always crops up, but we have done some and we are going to repeat them. The members ask for information on pensions, on the health system, on the insurance. They want to know about more immediate benefits. But we are well known for being a very supportive union. For example, if a member has a serious illness, or a big problem at home, we organize a compulsory collection.[26]

But the union has also had to face new problems, such as the automation of jobs and the impact of national social "explosions":

> They automated the weighing machines, now they are going to automate the cash registers, the cake and bread production ...
>
> The members went to the marches (during the "uprising" in October 2019), but not really as union members. For example, the women went to the women's marches because they were organized in the afternoon after work, and they identified themselves with those events. Others went as part of their football team fan club, but very few went as members of the union as such. (interview with Campuzano 2019)

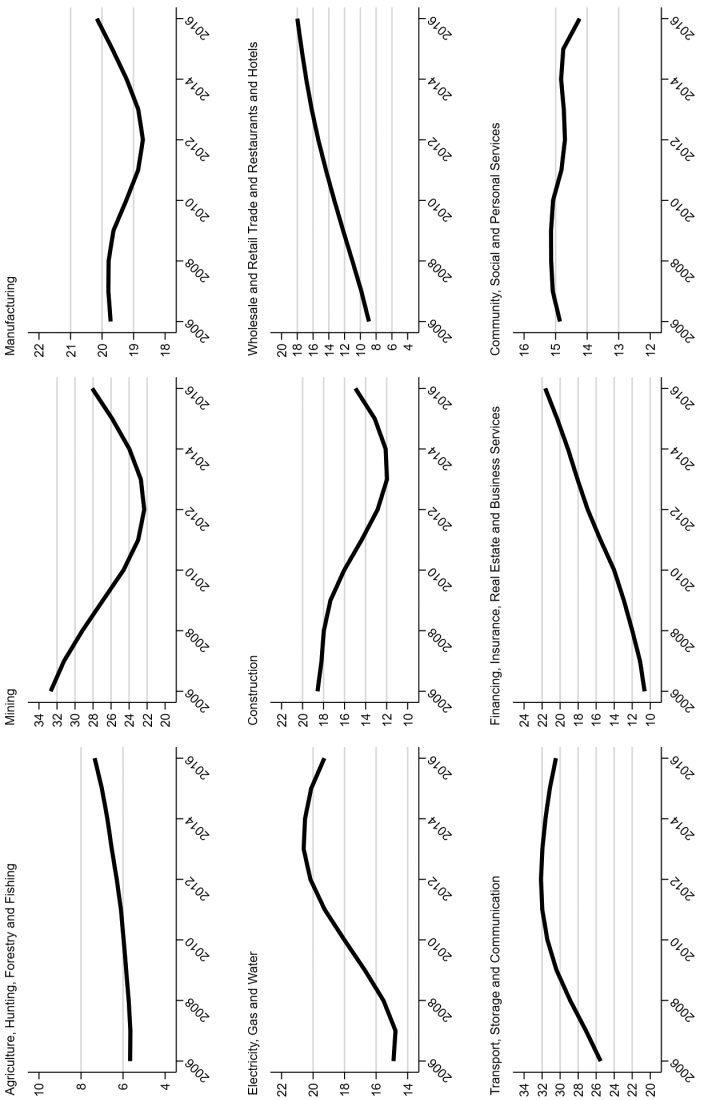

Figure 5. Harmonized Union Density by Economic Sector, 2006–2016

Source: Authors' elaboration based on the Union Yearbook of the Labor Directorate and Labour Force Survey of the National Institute of Statistics.[25]

Notes: (1) Calculations are on the private sector of the economy. (2) Waged employment statistics series have been harmonized according to the International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities Rev. 2. Employment figures have also been adjusted according to censor data and corrected for changes in the workforce survey questionnaire (2009/2010). (3) The figure shows tendency according to the selected Hodrick-Prescott tendency component.

In general, the new unions in the retail and services sector seem to be very similar to those unions which have existed, or are new, in the traditional unionized sectors.

5.3. Coverage of Collective Agreements

Due to the high degree of job instability and the institutional restrictions on collective bargaining in the private sector, collective agreements cover less than 13% of employees, which is even lower than the union density (Durán and Gamonal 2019).

And despite the increase in union density during the period of labor unrest, collective bargaining remains at company level or even below, at legal entity level.

This means, as the literature suggests (Bosch 2019), that no distributive aggregate effects have taken place. The renewal period did indeed bring benefits to those workers who took part, but those improvements gained are not generalized to cover wider sections of the working class and are limited to those workers who enjoy a strategic productive position in important industries and disappear as soon as the organizational power of those workers decreases.

In our discussion of the changes in working-class organization from 2006 onwards, we touch on the need for industry-wide or sector-wide negotiation (all interviews; Pérez-Ahumada 2023; Narbona 2024) to counteract this situation.

And international research (Bosch, Mayhew, and Gautié 2010; Bosch 2019) shows that to really challenge the macroeconomic situation—including the rate of surplus value—it is necessary to substantially increase the coverage of workers in collective agreements. To do that, the level at which collective bargaining takes place matters.

Indeed, the Chilean case shows that the rate of surplus value was not challenged by the working class partly because the scope of union renewal was narrow and most of the workers in general did not enjoy its benefits. Industry-wide agreements that extend results to all workers of a sector are required (Gamonal and Arellano 2019; Durán 2022) and this important step is not achieved during the union renewal period.

With the lack of an industry-wide collective bargaining system, the gains in terms of renewal do not translate into a working-class victory as a whole and cover exclusively unionized workers, because knock-on effects do not occur in this institutional setting (Durán and Stanton 2022). In neither mining nor forestry are unions able to achieve true industry-wide collective bargaining during the renewal process. As such, the organization and industrial insurgency during the period of union renewal is integrated into the general social balance in Chile (for a discussion of this process among the union leaderships, see Pérez-Ahumada 2023).

To sum up, no new institutionalization framework is created which could integrate the gains of the renewal period, such as legal collective bargaining at the industry level. As Daina Bellido de Luna said, "despite the efforts to reform the Chilean labor-related legislation developed during the military dictatorship, its structural foundations remain relatively untouched" (Bellido de Luna 2022, 5). Following Pablo Pérez-Ahumada: "when business power is strong and center-left governments are unable (or unwilling) to pursue pro-labor agendas, the linkages between labor leaders and parties can be prejudicial for labor as such linkages become a threat to working-class unity" (Pérez-Ahumada 2021, 88).

However, the strikes are an important step in breaking the hold of bureaucratic unionism and the collective bargaining ceiling by using new, radicalized tactics and negotiating above company level (Velásquez, Pérez, and Link 2022). Rank-and-file workers can feel the impact of their own actions as active union members, although the rate of exploitation has not fallen. Changes in labor safety measures, more, and more active, local delegates, better food and showers, make those who campaign to make these changes feel better and more confident in their capacities (interview with Peña 2019).

6. Conclusions

In Chile, the working class has been exposed to hyper-decentralized labor relations during the last 40 years, where collective bargaining outside the individual company is not permitted. For years, important unions have tried to change this situation and install a less fragmented and more inclusive system of bargaining but have failed.

However, from 2006, a decade-long wave of labor unrest was begun by workers who were not part of the usual negotiating process but subcontracted in precarious conditions in the export-related sectors of mining, forestry and salmon cultivation.

Much has been written about this period of "union renewal," that is in that process where weak unions are transformed into strong ones. In our article, we investigate changes in rank-and-file organization during that period and include an additional dimension that is absent in the literature, which is the use of Marxist concepts to investigate if the new types of union organization affect the rate of exploitation.

One might expect that the revitalization of unions, their rank-and-file democracy and strikes, would be associated with a fall in the rate of exploitation. However, in Chile the period of renewal (2006–2016), is not accompanied by a significant reduction in the rate of surplus value.

The impact of the strike wave is both wide and limited. We show that union growth is not generalized, indeed is concentrated in the retail and services sectors, especially among women. Furthermore, in general terms, the rate of unionization (despite such growth) has continued at a very low level and the consequent balance between profits and wages continues to strongly favor profits.

On the one hand, many more collective bargaining processes and strikes are needed to really challenge the power relations between labor and capital in Chile. This means that it would be necessary to abolish the existing industrial relations system (born in dictatorship with no discussion) and create a new one (born in democracy), in which sector-level collective bargaining would be dominant and would be able to produce aggregate distributive effects. In this way, unions with high bargaining power (e.g., mining unions), could act in solidarity with weak unions, and also on behalf of non-organized workers.

On the other hand, the movement has had a long-term political impact in that it has shown the power of rank-and-file organization, that union bureaucracy can be an obstacle in the path of democratic radical organization and that governments, their labor ministers and the strategies of controlled and orderly advance or transition, can be untrustworthy.

Notes

1. This practice is known as "multirut," which in 2014 was limited after successful mobilization (Gutiérrez-Crocco 2020).
2. *Concertación* [Concertation] was the name of the political center-left coalition that took office just after the Pinochet regime.
3. Interview with Edward Gallardo conducted by Gonzalo Durán in Santiago, December 13, 2019.
4. See https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1004156/000119312510150982/d20f.htm.
5. Interview with Cristian Cuevas conducted by Gonzalo Durán in Santiago, January 7, 2020.
6. Interview with Jorge Peña conducted by Gonzalo Durán in Rancagua, December 26, 2019.
7. Interview with Edward Gallardo conducted by Gonzalo Durán in Santiago, December 13, 2019.
8. Interview with Edward Gallardo conducted by Gonzalo Durán in Santiago, December 13, 2019.
9. See https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/ohl;jsessionid=42f9268f73f836402cb21bce1e9d.
10. See https://si3.bcentral.cl/Siete/ES/Siete/Cuadro/CAP_CCNN/MN_CCNN76/CCNN2018_IMACEC_01_A.
11. See https://www.ine.gob.cl/estadisticas/sociales/mercado-laboral/ocupacion-y-desocupacion.
12. See https://www.dt.gob.cl/portal/1629/w3-propertyvalue-188835.html.
13. See https://www.sernageomin.cl/anuario-de-la-mineria-de-chile/.
14. See https://www.sernageomin.cl/anuario-de-la-mineria-de-chile/.
15. See https://www.ine.gob.cl/estadisticas/sociales/mercado-laboral/ocupacion-y-desocupacion.
16. See annual reports of mining companies which are listed in the CMF (Financial Market Commission), especially in the period 2006–2009, https://www.cmfchile.cl/portal/principal/613/w3-propertyname-815.html.

17. The World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS) is a software that provides access to international merchandise trade, tariff and non-tariff measures (NTM) data. See https://wits.worldbank.org/.
18. See https://www.bcentral.cl/areas/estadisticas/cuentas-nacionales-institucionales.
19. See http://tramites.dirtrab.cl/VentanillaTransparencia/Transparencia/RerporteRRLLOrg.aspx.
20. Interview with Rodrigo Escobar conducted by Gonzalo Durán in Santiago, January 2, 2020.
21. Interview with Sergio Rojas conducted by Gonzalo Durán in Santiago, December 30, 2019.
22. See https://www.dt.gob.cl/portal/1629/w3-propertyvalue-188835.html.
23. Interview with Edward Gallardo conducted by Gonzalo Durán in Santiago, December 13, 2019.
24. Interview with Mirian Campuzano conducted by Gonzalo Durán in Santiago, December 23, 2019.
25. See https://www.dt.gob.cl/portal/1629/w3-propertyvalue-188835.html, and https://www.ine.gob.cl/estadisticas/sociales/mercado-laboral/ocupacion-y-desocupacion.
26. Interview with Mirian Campuzano conducted by Gonzalo Durán in Santiago, December 23, 2019.

References

Alvarez Vallejos, R. 2009. "Desde fuera o dentro de la institucionalidad? La 'huelga larga del salmón' y las nuevas estrategias sindicales en Chile (2006–2008)" [Inside or Outside the Institutions? The "Long Salmon Strike" and New Union Strategies in Chile (2006–2008)]. In *El renacer de la huelga obrera en Chile. El movimiento sindical en la primera década del siglo XXI* [The Renewal of Worker Strikes in Chile: The Union Movement in the First Decade of the Twenty-First Century], edited by A. Aravena and D. Nuñez, 75–116. Santiago de Chile: Instituto de Ciencias Alejandro Lipschutz (ICAL).

Alvarez Vallejos, R. 2011. "El Plan Laboral y la Negociación Colectiva: origen de un nuevo sindicalismo en Chile? 1979–1985" [The Labor Plan and Collective Bargaining: Origin of the New Unionism in Chile? 1979–1985]. *Boletín del Instituto de Historia Argentina y Americana "Dr. Emilio Ravignani"* 35/36 (2): 92–115.

Angell, A. 1972. *Politics and the Labour Movement in Chile*. London: Oxford University Press.

Angell, A. 2010. "Social Class and Popular Mobilisation in Chile: 1970–1973." *A Contra Corriente* 7 (2): 1–51.

Aravena, A., and D. Nuñez, eds. 2009. *El renacer de la huelga obrera en Chile. El movimiento sindical en la primera década del siglo XXI* [The Renewal of Worker Strikes in Chile: The Union Movement in the First Decade of the Twenty-First Century]. Santiago de Chile: Instituto de Ciencias Alejandro Lipschutz (ICAL).

Ayala Córdova, J., and N. Ratto Ribó. 2018. "Estrategias sindicales en dos grandes empresas fragmentadas y filiales de Coca Cola en Chile" [Union Strategies in Two Large and Fragmented Company Affiliates of Coca-Cola in Chile]. *Sociología del Trabajo*, no. 94: 63–87.

Baccaro, L., K. Hamann, and L. Turner. 2003. "The Politics of Labour Movement Revitalization: The Need for a Revitalized Perspective." *European Journal of Industrial Relations* 9 (1): 119–133.

Bank-Muñoz, C. 2017. *Building Power from Below: Chilean Workers Take on Walmart*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Bellido de Luna, D. 2022. "Employer Constraints on Trade Union Renewal in Chile." *Journal of Industrial Relations* 64 (5): 690–710.

Berg, J., and D. Contreras. 2007. "Political-Economic Regime and the Wage Curve: Evidence from Chile, 1957–96." *International Review of Applied Economics* 18 (2): 151–165.

Bosch, G. 2019. "Tarifverträge—Schlüssel zur Verringerung der Lohnungleichheit" [Collective Agreements—The Key to Reducing Wage Inequality]. In *Makroökonomie im Dienste der Menschen* [Macroeconomics at the Service of People], edited by S. Dullien, H. Hagemann, H. Joebges, C. Logeay and K. Rietzler, 247–258. Marburg: Metropolis-Vertrag.

Bosch, G., K. Mayhew, and J. Gautié. 2010. "Industrial Relations, Legal Regulations, and Wage Setting." In *Low-Wage Work in the Wealthy World*, edited by J. Gautié and J. Schmitt, 91–146. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Brega, C., G. Durán, and B. Sáez. 2015. "Mujeres trabajando, una exploración al valor del trabajo y la calidad del empleo en Chile" [Women at Work, an Exploration of the Value of Work and Quality of Employment in Chile]. https://fundacionsol.cl/blog/estudios-2/post/mujeres-trabajando-una-exploracion-al-valor-del-trabajo-y-la-calidad-del-empleo-en-chile-6108.

Calderón, R. 2008. "Nuevas expresiones de acción sindical desde la precarización del empleo: El caso de los trabajadores contratistas de la gran minería del cobre" [New Expressions of Union Action under Precarious Employment: The Case of Subcontracted Workers in Large Scale Copper Mining]. In *Flexibilidad laboral y subjetividades* [Labor Flexibility and Subjectivity], edited by Á. Soto, 111–134. Santiago de Chile: LOM Editores.

Dirección del Trabajo [Labor Directorate]. 2023. *Compendio de Estadísticas Sindicales* [Union Statistics Compendium]. Departamento de Estudios de la Dirección del Trabajo [Department of Investigation of the Labor Directorate].

Durán, G. 2022. "Marginalisation and Fragmentation of Collective Bargaining in Chile. Impacts on Workers' Power Resources and Income Distribution." PhD diss., Universität Duisburg-Essen.

Durán, G., and S. Gamonal. 2019. "La opacidad de las cifras: la cobertura de la negociación colectiva en Chile" [The Obscurity of Figures: The Coverage of Collective Bargaining in Chile]. *Derecho y Critica Social* 5 (1–2): 1–38.

Durán, G., and M. Kremerman. 2018. "Los verdaderos sueldos de Chile. Panorama del valor de la fuerza de trabajo usando la ESI 2017" [The Real Level of Wages in Chile: Panorama of the Value of Labour Power Using ESI 2017]. https://fundacionsol.cl/cl_luzit_herramientas/static/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Los-Verdaderos-Salarios-NESI-2017-1.pdf.

Durán, G., and M. Stanton. 2022. "The Chilean Economy, an Analysis of the Dynamics of Profits, Investments and Production: A Marxist Approach." *Capital and Class* 46 (6): 377–400.

Durán, G., and M. Stanton. 2024. "Reductions in the Working Week: Labour Intensity and Productivity in Chile from a Marxist Perspective." *International Critical Thought* 14 (2): 271–290.

Durán-Palma, F., and D. López. 2009. "Contract Labour Mobilisation in Chile's Copper Mining and Forestry Sectors." *Employee Relations* 31 (3): 245–263.

Ffrench-Davis, R. 2018. *Reformas económicas en Chile, 1973–2017: neoliberalismo, crecimiento con equidad e inclusión* [Economic Reforms in Chile, 1973–2017: Neoliberalism, Growth with Equality and Integration]. Santiago de Chile: Taurus.

Fox-Hodess, K., and C. Santibáñez. 2020. "The Social Foundations of Structural Power: Strategic Position, Worker Unity and External Alliances in the Making of the Chilean Dockworker Movement." *Global Labour Journal* 11 (3): 222–238.

Frege, C., and J. Kelly. 2003. "Union Revitalization Strategies in Comparative Perspective." *European Journal of Industrial Relations* 9 (1): 7–24.

Gamonal, S., and P. Arellano. 2019. "Negociación colectiva ramal y los mecanismos de extensión: los casos de España y Francia" [Sectorial Collective Bargaining and the Extension Mechanisms: The

Cases of Spain and France]. *Revista de derecho (Valparaiso)* 53: 37–66. http://dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0718-68512019005000505.

Gutiérrez-Crocco, F. 2020. "Contesting the Neoliberal Order through Legal Mobilisation: The Case of Chilean Unions." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 53 (3): 575–599.

Harvey, D. 2005. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. London: Oxford University Press.

Kumar, P., and C. Schenk. 2006. "Union Renewal and Organizational Change: A Review of the Literature." In *Paths to Union Renewal: Canadian Experiences*, edited by P. Kumar and C. Schenk, 29–60. Peterborough: Broadview Press.

Las Heras, J., and L. Rodríguez. 2021. "Striking to Renew: Basque Unions' Organizing Strategies and Use of the Strike-Fund." *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 59 (3): 669–700.

Manky, O. 2018. "Resource Mobilisation and Precarious Workers' Organisations: An Analysis of the Chilean Subcontracted Mineworkers' Unions." *Work, Employment and Society* 32 (3): 581–598.

Marx, K. 1976. *Capital*, vol. 1. Middlesex: Penguin Books.

McAlevey, J. 2016. *No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Medel, R., and D. Pérez. 2017. "Tres modelos de conflicto laboral en Chile: El peso de la economía, la organización sindical y el régimen de trabajo en las tendencias de la huelga extra legal" [Three Models of Labor Conflicts in Chile: The Weight of the Economy, Union Organization and Working Conditions in Illegal Strikes]. *Revista Colombiana de Sociología* 40 (2): 173–195.

Moody, K. 2017. *On New Terrain: How Capital Is Reshaping the Battleground of Class War*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.

Muñoz, M. 2022. *Identidad y Trabajo. El proceso de construcción identitaria en los trabajadores subcontratados de la Gran Minería del Cobre en Chile* [Identity and Work: The Process of Identity of Subcontracted Workers in Large Scale Copper Mining in Chile]. Ciudad de México: El Colegio de México.

Murray, G. 2017. "Union Renewal: What Can We Learn from Three Decades of Research?" *Transfer* 23 (1): 9–29.

Narbona, K. 2015. "Antecedentes del Modelo de Relaciones Laborales Chileno" [Background of the Chilean Labor Relations Model]. *Proyecto Plataformas Territoriales UE-Fundación SOL*. Accessed June 3, 2024. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/299404533_Antecedentes_del_Modelo_de_Relaciones_Laborales_Chileno.

Narbona, K. 2024. "Autonomía sindical y fuerza propia. Experiencia, expectativas y dilemas del activismo sindical en la era del neoliberalismo post Pinochet, desde el retorno de las libertades civiles hasta la revuelta popular de fines de 2019 (Chile, 1990–2020)" [Union Autonomy and Strength: Experience, Expectations and Dilemmas of Union Activism during Post-Pinochet Neoliberalism, from the Return of Civil Liberties to the Popular Revolt at the End of 2019 (Chile, 1990–2020)]. PhD diss., Universität zu Köln.

Nuñez, D. 2009. "El movimiento de los trabajadores contratistas de CODELCO: una experiencia innovadora de negociación colectiva" [The CODELCO Subcontracted Workers Movement: A New Experience in Collective Bargaining]. In *El renacer de la huelga obrera en Chile. El movimiento sindical en la primera década del siglo XXI* [The Renewal of Worker Strikes in Chile: The Union Movement in the First Decade of the Twenty-First Century], edited by A. Aravena and D. Nuñez, 37–74. Santiago de Chile: Instituto de Ciencias Alejandro Lipschutz (ICAL).

Olguin, M. 2000. *Memoria para un nuevo siglo; Chile, miradas a la segunda mitad del siglo XX* [Chile, Visions of the Second Half of the Twentieth Century]. Santiago de Chile: LOM.

Palacios-Valladares, I. 2010. "From Militancy to Clientelism: Labor Union Strategies and Membership Trajectories in Contemporary Chile." *Latin American Politics and Society* 52 (2): 73–102.

Pérez, D. 2019. *Territorio Laboral Capitalista. Despliegue de poder sindical en minería y supermercados* [Capitalist Labor Territory: Union Power in Mining and Supermarkets]. Santiago: RIL Editores.

Pérez, D. 2022. "Reinterpretando el sindicalismo tercerizado minero en Chile. Una perspectiva marxista territorial de la subcontratación" [Reinterpretation of Subcontracted Mining Unionism in Chile: A Marxist Perspective on Territorial Subcontracting]. *Dados, Río de Janeiro* 65 (2): 1–36.

Pérez, D., and S. Link. 2018. "Control territorial en la disputa del proceso de trabajo: sindicalismo chileno en empresas de minería versus supermercados" [Territorial Control in the Conflict over the Labor Process: Chilean Unionism in Mining versus Supermarkets]. *Revista Política y Sociedad* 55 (2): 575–596.

Pérez, D., R. Medel, and D. Velásquez. 2017. "Radiografía de las huelgas laborales en el Chile del neoliberalismo democrático (1990–2015): masividad del conflicto por fuera de la ley en un sindicalismo desbalanceado" [Radiography of Strikes under Democratic Neoliberalism in Chile (1990–2015): Growth of Conflict outside the Law with Unbalanced Unions]. In *Trabajadores & Trabajadoras. Procesos y acción sindical en el neoliberalismo chileno 1979–2017* [Male and Female Workers: Processes and Union Action under Chilean Neoliberalism 1979–2017], edited by J. Ponce, C. Santibáñez, and J. Pinto, 155–176. Valparaíso: Editorial América en Movimiento.

Pérez-Ahumada, P. 2021. "Why Is It So Difficult to Reform Collective Labour Law? Associational Power and Policy Continuity in Chile in Comparative Perspective." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 53 (1): 81–105.

Pérez-Ahumada, P. 2023. *Building Power to Shape Labor Policy: Unions, Employer Associations, and Reform in Neoliberal Chile*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Raptis, M. 1973. *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Chile: A Dossier on Workers' Participation in the Revolutionary Process*. London: Macmillan.

Rojas, R. 2016. "Out of the Ashes: The Resurrection of the Chilean Labor Movement." *New Labor Forum* 25 (2): 36–46.

Rojas-Miño, I. 2001. "El peculiar concepto de empresa para efectos jurídico laborales: implicancias para la negociación colectiva" [The Strange Concept of the Company for Judgements on Labor Related Matters: Implications for Collective Bargaining]. *Ius Et Praxis* 7 (2): 409–422.

Ruminot, N. 2009. "La huelga en Forestal Arauco: de las acciones sindicales al forzamiento de la negociación colectiva inter-empresa" [The Strike in Forestal Arauco: From Union Activities to the Strengthening of Inter-company Collective Bargaining]. In *El renacer de la huelga obrera en Chile. El movimiento sindical en la primera década del siglo XXI* [The Renewal of Worker Strikes in Chile: The Union Movement in the First Decade of the Twenty-First Century], edited by A. Aravena and D. Nuñez, 117–134. Santiago de Chile: Instituto de Ciencias Alejandro Lipschutz (ICAL).

Sato, A., and G. Durán. 2024. "La mercantilización de los cuidados y la tasa de explotación. Un estudio exploratorio para el caso de Chile" [The Commodification of Cities and the Rate of Exploitation: An Exploratory Study of the Case of Chile]. Documento de Trabajo.

Schmalz, S., C. Ludwig, and E. Webster. 2018. "The Power Resources Approach: Developments and Challenges." *Global Labour Journal* 9 (2): 113–134.

Universidad San Sebastián and Equifax. 2018. "XXI Informe de Deuda Personal" [N° XXI Personal Debt Report]. https://assets.equifax.com/assets/chile/informe_deuda_morosa_segundo_trimestre.pdf.

Velásquez, D., D. Pérez, and S. Link. 2022. "What Tactical Repertoire to Use in Strikes and When to Use It? Strategies of Workers and Their Mobilization Power in Chile (2010–2018)." *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 60 (1): 78–98.